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SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1913.

FARMERS' TAX CONFERENCES IMPROVING

The seed corn of progress is planted when the farmer interests himself in the government under which he lives. It is his hand that brakes or sends speeding that legislative machinery through which change must be achieved. It is because these things are true that the profound interest in tax reform displayed by the farmers of Virginia indicates that present conditions cannot exist much longer. What an impressive evidence of the need of equalization in taxation it was when 420 farmers from Elizabeth City, Warwick, York and James City Counties assembled at Hampton Thursday to consider in dead earnest the tax issue!

Better farming and fairer taxes were the things that these men came together to consider. They met in response to the hospitable invitation of the Hampton Retail Merchants' Association to attend a conference to discuss progressive agriculture in general and the inequality and injustice of the prevailing tax system in particular. The farmers' institute was held under the auspices of the State Department of Agriculture and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, while the tax conference was under the auspices of the Retail Merchants' Association. It was the most successful meeting of its sort ever attempted on the Peninsula—a splendid assembly of representative farmers. The Newport News Press reports that "not in many years has any one thing created so much enthusiasm as the conference held today."

The tax situation was mercilessly flayed at the Hampton conference. It was made plain that the system is a honeycomb of injustice and inequality. The farmers present were shown that of the 100 counties of the Commonwealth, there are but twenty-nine which put into the State treasury more money than they take out, and that of these twenty-nine, only two pay more than Elizabeth City County, although it is next to the smallest county. It was explained that the twenty-two counties southwest of Roanoke fail by \$246,952.03 to pay their own expenses to the State. The scale of widely-varying assessments of certain subjects in several counties left no doubt upon the minds of the members of the conference that in many counties the present tax system is a tissue of falsehood, fraud and deceit, and that, unchecked, it tends to make many a county a county of liars. Enough was laid before the assemblage to convince any doubting Thomas that tax equalization must be effected.

The Hampton conference should be the forerunner of many similar meetings in every part of Virginia. The people must be informed as to the rottenness of the tax system before they elect their legislative representatives, set the farmers together and put before them the cold facts about the tax-dogging of the tax-dogging counties. That is the most effective method of bringing home to them the fact that there can be no real progress, no real reform, in Virginia until a just tax system is established. If the facts can be presented to the people before election day, a tax reform Legislature can be elected. If not, then for two years more the tax-paying individuals and tax-paying counties will have to pay the bills of the tax-dogging individuals and the tax-dogging counties.

More farmers' tax conferences must be had, and had now. Delay means death to tax reform.

ONLY ONE OPINION.

There seems to be but one opinion in quarters entitled to any weight as to President Wilson's attitude on the six-power loan question. It is that he is to be applauded for it. He is an ardent and consistent champion of the policies of Mr. Taft and his advisers as the New York Tribune declares its conviction that "the American people will uphold President Wilson in refusing to continue the government's support of further participation by American bankers in the scheme."

The Wall Street Journal also strongly indorses his decision. That contemporary regard his policy as safeguarding for one thing, against a contingency by no means remote, which might entangle us in armed intervention and in this connection, as fortifying that view, calls attention to this warning fact:

"More than thirty years ago Great Britain was placed in just such a position, and whatever the compulsion of Egypt may have brought forth, its original cause was the collection of interest and principal for the holders of Egyptian United Bonds."

"The possession of Egypt," the Journal admits, "is of great importance to Britain, in view of her empire in the East. But," it asks, "could any such excuse be offered for ourselves?" Some whatever, except that our relations to our partners obligated us to become a cat's-paw in their interests.

President Wilson has not only affirmed historic American doctrine, that has been weighed and not found wanting. He has forestalled a possible involvement of the country, that no amount of expansion of trade and commerce could compensate us for, in truth, we have not in the long

run far more to gain than we have to lose in that direction, by his course.

WIDE AND BEAUTIFUL STREETS.

There are two Sphinx questions in modern city life. One is, why passengers huddle together like sheep, standing on each other's feet and falling over each other's bodies, in the rear of a street car, when there is plenty of room in front. The other is, why do cities build straight and narrow streets, when they have all the surrounding country from which to take territory and make the right kind of boulevards for human beings? To the first question there is no answer, and we intend to waste no time appealing with the conductor for an imbecile public to "move up front, please." But there is still some hope that in coming years we may see the wisdom of using all the land we need to make a beautiful and comfortable urban home of the city.

We have defined the economic and technical aspects of the annexation question. Any man who does not see that Richmond must grow, and that we are suffering already from congestion, is hopeless. The only reasons why annexation is not already an accomplished fact are the inertia of large communities and the selfishness of a few interested persons. But aside from these practical questions, there is the simple fact of having enough room to be comfortable in. Once lack of transportation facilities demanded that cities be built compactly so that little time would be wasted in getting to and from work. Electric traction and automobiles have done away with this necessity. It is figured that the living area of a city is anywhere within the radius of one hour's ride from the center. Nowadays that means from ten to twenty miles. Of course, there is the expense of extending city utilities for long distances for a few consumers, but it is certain that Richmond could take in four miles in every direction and still not be too large.

In New York alone do natural handicaps limit the city area, and even these have been largely overcome. We have all Henrico County to use, yet we go on laying out straight, ugly streets so narrow that they are really only alleys. We could have every street a Monument Avenue, with the added beauty of curves and natural grades, if we wanted. We could have grass plots and a continuous park and playground down the middle of our streets with a small expenditure. In the West new subdivisions are not plotted out as stiff parallelograms, like geometrical problems. They are pierced by winding roads that give every house a pleasant outlook, and open charming vistas of trees and lawns in all directions. The land is used to catch a hint of the open country, and to give dwellers breathing space and a sense of privacy. This plan costs a little more, but when it is a matter of making the surroundings of a man's own home pleasant and beautiful, is not the cost a minor consideration?

It is time we made life livable. Much of our lives, as well as most of our wives' and children's lives, is spent at home. Is fifty feet of front and a sixty-foot street the best we can afford? Men ought to realize the possibilities in more room for adding charm to their brief span of earthly days.

SILHOUETTES OF SPRING.

Delicate and surprising beauty waits the searcher who will lift his winter-bound eyes to the soft-toned sky of twilight and study the silhouettes of bare trees against the faint radiance of the rising moon. Not all of Nature's witchery is claimed by the full-panopied epulence of summer or the Persian coloring of fall. When the moon rose across Richmond on the first night of spring, it revealed a black lacework of just budding trees that caught poetry a captive for a moment above the dusty city streets.

The beauty of tree trunks and spreading boughs and slender outposts of twigs, veiled with a hint of new buds, is not insistent or obvious. It is elusive and Japanese. It is made of the grace of a thousand interlaced lines, full of a thousand tones of shadows. Some trees reach up every bough as if petitioning cold Diana for the gift of new life. Others are twisted and askew, torn by some dryad passion, looking like wild women touched with tragedy. Lear's daughters, wind-tossed as to hair. Around the thick trunks of some runs ivy, cloudy as smoke, clinging to the ladder that will lead to all the stars. Little tassels of seeds and leaves swing gently downward, jet-black, as a trimming of jet-jewels on the gown of a masked boy. Old husks of seed-pods, lingering untimely in the rebirth, are shuddery symbols of death.

In all this tempest of bare limbs is emotion. Without reason, one hears the murmur of historic woods, or the clear bells of longlost fairyland. It is the specter of life's skeleton waiting the benediction of spring to make it whole with rustling garments. Here is no grim, bent as from bearing a grievous burden, here, the twisted fingers of despair, here, the black outcries of some mysterious alphabet, giant words, spelling we know not what solemn message from another world.

The moon is the master of these shadow shapes. The moon, and the faint afterglow of cool pink or amber. It shone through a mist of clouds as if through deep waters; it was submerged in its own light. One moment, it seemed a silver fish caught in this tortured net; then, a pale carcer under the lace of a shawl. The golden globes of street lights burned like many colored lanterns at a carnival.

Perhaps it was a carnival, and the giant alphabet spelled an invitation to the debut of Miss Spring.

WHAT ARE VIRGINIA MUNICIPALITIES GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

Commission government is sweeping through North Carolina. Its cities and towns seem to have realized suddenly the certain benefits of this new device in municipal government. From small

villages all the way up to large cities the people are clamoring for this change. The demand comes from all quarters of the Old North State. If the present gait is kept up, it will not be long until it leads all the States of the South in putting into operation the best and most satisfactory form of municipal government that has yet been devised in the United States. Wilmington, the second city in size in the State, adopted commission rule two years ago, and it has proved a decided success. Raleigh, third in size, is considering a similar departure from the antiquated councilmanic method of city administration. Led by the Chamber of Commerce, the people of the North Carolina capital are carrying on an admirable campaign of education that will surely end in the establishment of the system.

The wave in North Carolina is a part of the tide that is sweeping over the country. Commission government prevails in almost 300 towns and cities. Last month sixty places adopted it. By the census of 1910, there were in the United States more than 1,100 incorporated places possessing more than 5,000 population. Twenty per cent of these have already adopted commission rule, yet that form is but twelve years old. Alabama has nine commission governed municipalities. Birmingham, with 132,000 population, is the largest, and Hartselle, with 1,247, the smallest. This method applies with practically equal success to mere hamlets and to great cities. New Orleans, with almost 250,000 population, is the largest city under this plan of administration. Twelve California municipalities have it, Oakland, with 150,000 population, being the chief. Colorado has four cities under the plan; Illinois, 20; Iowa, 8; Kansas, 22; Louisiana, 7; Massachusetts, 8; Michigan, 5; Mississippi, 7; Minnesota, 4; Nebraska, 4; New Jersey, 8; Oklahoma, 18; South Carolina, 3; South Dakota, 13; Tennessee, 4; Texas, 16; Utah, 5; Washington, 8; Wisconsin, 7. The commission form also obtains in a number of cities in Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, West Virginia and Wyoming. Commission government is no longer an experiment in the United States; it has demonstrated its efficiency.

Yet Virginia is isolated from this movement. While one of our municipalities has put into operation a modified form of commission government, no Virginia city or town is under a real commission form. It is not high time that Virginia begin to give it a trial! Under the constitutional amendment passed in November, our municipalities are enabled to choose any form of government they desire, subject to the approval of the General Assembly. If any town or city is desirous of adopting the commission form, it is time for it to get busy, for less than a year remains until the Legislature meets, and, unless it acts, nothing can be secured in the way of a new form of municipal government until the General Assembly of 1916 meets. Why do not some of our cities and towns consider the question of commission government, and its innumerable advantages over the present forms, with a view to calling an election to decide whether or not it shall be adopted? North Carolina is aroused to the tremendous superiority of commission government over any other form. How much longer will Virginia municipalities wait before availing themselves of the benefits of this efficient, economical and popular system of administration?

"Mrs. President" Wilson's favorite recipes are for "old fashioned cream cookies, walnut cookies, gingerbread nuts, hermit cookies, peanut cookies, emergency cookies, Scotch oatmeal cookies, favorite nut cookies, coffee novelty cookies, chocolate drop cookies, honey gingersnaps and Connecticut doughnuts." If that's been what she's fed her husband on, he deserves to be President.

Ex-Governor Hadley, of Missouri, is the third person to receive the unusual recognition of honorary membership in the Colorado Bar Association. The other two were General Coghlan and General Fitzhugh Lee.

Perhaps Mr. Secretary Bryan wants to restore the spirit of the forefathers because he is almost a forefather himself by this time.

That German diplomat need not abandon his career just because the Kaiser says he must not marry an American wife. He will still need all the diplomacy he can find handy.

It is simply human to think how much fun it would be to spank that Million Dollar McLean baby just once.

That guestless dinner that the Chamber of Commerce is not going to give reminds us of the lamented Sydney Smith's recipe for rabbit pie. "First get the rabbit."

Internae Page turned over a new leave.

Why reform the tax laws? They need reforming.

Come on, conventions. We're going to build another hotel.

If deeds count, Miss Grace Arents is the First Citizen of Richmond. To her manifold other civic services she has now added that of helping make Richmond more beautiful by encouraging clean yards and more flowers. In the territory of which St. Andrew's is a kind of communal home, a prize of 15 for each of the months of June, July, August and September will be given for the most attractive front yard. Smaller amounts will be given for others. We are glad to welcome this idea for improving the physical appearance of Richmond. We join with this public-spirited lady in the hope that other neighborhoods will co-operate by offering some inducements for neatness and color during the hot and trying summer months. Let us begin on Clean-Up Day and scatter a little beauty through the old town.

On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

Contributory Negligence.

Lighting the furnace fire with excellent gasoline.

Making love on the steps of a peat house.

Smiting a policeman on the nose.

Trying to fondle a strange bulldog.

Asking the young lady's father what time it is.

Wearing a silk hat to an Elks' social session.

Asking the pride of the household to recite something.

I remember, I remember.
The coal I used to throw
Into my hungry furnace
To make the blamed thing go.

I remember, I remember.
The snow piled up in banks,
Which I was wont to shovel
And get no sort of thanks.

I remember, I remember.
How I, the verdant chump,
Climbed out of bed each morning
To thaw the kitchen pump.

I remember, I remember.
The plumbers used to stay
For hours around our shanty
To mend the pipes each day.

I remember, I remember.
These things all cling to me,
Spring weather we're now having
Suits me, yes, to a T.

According to Uncle Abner.

Our idea of havin' a good time is to have a boil on the back of our neck, the scalded rheumatiz and a note due at the bank, and then be obliged to set through a three-hour lecture on "The Philosophy of Happiness" by some preacher that has stung us on a balky horse a week or two before.

You can't tell by the looks of a toad how far he kin jump or an ackter, either.

Next to a busted pair of suspenders, fear is the greatest thing in the world to make a feller unhappy. Old Man Hickey set around and expected to have newmen for seventy-one years, and then died of old age before he got his wish.

I have got more use for a feller that yields to temptation once in a while than I have for a feller that brags that he never does, for the latter is a liar.

It is a long lane that has no automobile garage.

Mrs. H. Huggins, who recently married H. H. Huggins, threw one of her first biscuits at him the other day, and his recovery is not expected.

William D. Huggins says he doesn't believe in being stingy with the women folks. He gives his wife 25 cents every Saturday night to buy something extra for the Sunday dinner.

A New Idea.

"I've got a great money-making idea," said Mr. Blinks to his neighbor. "What's that?" inquired the neighbor.

"Do you see that automobile of mine?" asked Mr. Blinks, pointing with all of the pride of a campaign speaker. "I do," replied the neighbor.

"Well, every time I take that car apart to fix it and put it together, I always have fifteen or twenty parts left over, and I can't find any room for them. I have taken that car apart three times, and I have got the back end of my garage full of parts, and the car runs just as well as it ever did. My idea is this: I think when a man has taken a car apart say six times, he will have enough parts left over to build a new car, exclusive of the body. I am going to take my car apart every week, and I think I ought to be able to build at least three new cars out of it. Then I will sell the old car and get another and start taking it apart. I figure that I ought to clean up about 500 per cent on every car I buy."

Miss Amy Pringle has been down to the city to be re-named. She is one of our most polished young ladies. Mr. H. Huggins has bought a house and lot on the installation plan, and if all goes well his great-grandfather will be able to make the last payment. When Miss Ephraima Perkins was down to the Rapids she went into a store to buy a shirtwaist. She told a clerk what she wanted, and he said: "What bust, madam?" Miss Perkins looked around nervously and replied: "Blessed if I know, sir; I didn't hear anything."

Voice of the People

Answers Dr. McDaniel on Religious Liberty.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir—I regret that I am forced to ask you for additional space in your valued paper, and Mr. Huggins has bought a house and lot on the installation plan, and if all goes well his great-grandfather will be able to make the last payment. When Miss Ephraima Perkins was down to the Rapids she went into a store to buy a shirtwaist. She told a clerk what she wanted, and he said: "What bust, madam?" Miss Perkins looked around nervously and replied: "Blessed if I know, sir; I didn't hear anything."

Before replying to his letter appearing in Saturday's issue, I wish to say that I am not desirous of engaging in a religious controversy, as I consider such a controversy un-American on account of the religious freedom granted to all denominations by both Federal and State Constitutions; and un-Christian, to a certain degree, because it often causes anger, which eventually leads to hatred between members of the opposing denominations. Little, if any, good is accomplished by a religious controversy, as the controversialists and their followers continue to cling to their beliefs.

The issue that I took was the question of dates, and if the assertion that the Baptist statesman in replying to John Bright in England that his people had given to the world, as a special contribution, both civil and religious liberty, could this assertion be proved as a historical fact.

I admit that I am not much of a student of history, but I am always willing to learn from my superiors in any and all things.

There is no need of muddying the waters with other issues, as the only way to a question is to confine one's self strictly to that question until it is disposed of, and then others can be taken up in their respective turn.

The reverend gentleman leaves the question at issue and branches off into matters of "unholy alliance of church and state," and then charges that the Baptist statesman in replying to John Bright in England that his people had given to the world, as a special contribution, both civil and religious liberty, could this assertion be proved as a historical fact.

I made no charges against Roger Williams, but on the contrary gave him full credit. I did not belittle the divine teachings of our Saviour just because human nature was the cause of one of His apostles denying Him, and another betraying Him (two out of twelve—16 1-2 per cent). The Lord then turns around and makes Peter the prince of the band. Neither do I say that the Baptist religion, its ministers and followers should suffer and be condemned on account of Clarence Richmond, the Baptist preacher executed in Massachusetts last year for the most heinous crimes of the present generation.

I did not quote Cardinal Gibbons to prove my statements, but on the contrary, quoted the same Protestant

minister—Baneroff—whom Mr. McDaniel quoted in his sermon.

My statement in regard to religious liberty was that "the celebrated act of toleration was passed in 1649 by the General Assembly in the Province of Maryland, a majority of whom were Catholics, and the act was passed without a dissenting voice, the act being drafted by Cecilius Calvert, a Catholic, and as the historian Baneroff, who was a New England Protestant clergyman, says, 'being the first in the annals of mankind to make religious freedom the basis of the state.'"

Whether Calvert had dollar marks in his eyes or not doesn't change the fact of the question at issue.

And regarding civil liberty, I stated that "the greatest bulwark of civil liberty is the famous Magna Charta. It is the foundation, not only of British, but also of American constitutional freedom. Among other blessings contained in this instrument, it establishes trial by jury and the right of habeas corpus, and provides that there shall be no taxation without representation. It is the creation and gift of Catholics. That Magna Charta was created, maintained and fought for by Catholics three centuries before the so-called Reformation. It is the immortal document wrested from King John Lackland by the Catholic Archbishop Stephen Langton and the Catholic barons of England on the plain of Runnymede, and King John signed and sealed the charter with great solemnity on June 15, 1215. That's going back seven centuries. Can you beat it? The common law of England is founded upon the Catholic canon law, which is the church's application of the principles of the Gospel to the problems of human society.

Now, if the Rev. Mr. McDaniel can go back further than the above dates, I pray, as one desiring more knowledge of history and using the words of the Rev. A. L. Crouse, "that he set forth his historic information so that its integrity may be tested." Give us dates and authority.

In conclusion, let us take the good counsel of St. Paul, when he declares: "Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, doeth not perversely; . . . is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil." (1 Cor. xiii.)

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Let us all sincerely pray that on the last day we will all meet in that heavenly kingdom, and that the hundreds of Popes (from Peter to Pius X.), with their millions of bishops, priests and laymen, will be lined up on one side, and the thousands of Protestant ministers and their millions of followers drawn up on the other side, all mingled with all of us will be other God-fearing men, and we will all look at one another and say: "How did you get here? By what road did you come?"

We will then forget our religious dissensions on earth, and they will be drowned in the celestial chorus of voices singing "Hosanna in Excelsis."

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for this most liberal space, and trusting that this will close the question so far as I am concerned, I am,

Respectfully,
WM. B. DAUGHTREY,
Portsmouth, Va.

Wants Personalia of Great Virginians.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir—I am trying to write lives of Governor Mattie Lee Waller Tazewell, Abel Parker Upshur, Benjamin Watkins Leigh and George C. Dromgoole, of Virginia, and I appreciate any aid that your readers may be able to give me. Letters to or from these men, anything written by them, and any mention of them in contemporary

newspapers, letters, etc., will be of material assistance in the work. All such materials will be gratefully received, carefully preserved and promptly returned; those contributing them will be helping a Virginian to write a part of Virginia's history, and to do justice to four great Virginians.

Very truly yours,
EDWARD J. WOODHOUSE,
1407 Hanover Avenue, Richmond, Va.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

Drinks.

Is the difference in the structure of the brain of a man and that of a woman? Which is supposed to be the stronger?

DRAKE'S BRANCH.

No difference. It depends on who does the "supposing."

St. Louis Paper.

Please give me the address of some good paper in St. Louis, Mo.

PAPER.

The St. Louis Republican.

A Problem.

A and B each owe C \$5, which they propose to pay by digging a ditch 100 yards long. A charges 8 cents per yard and B 12 cents per yard for the work. How many yards will each dig?

W. N. PENNY.

The problem contains conditions which are contradictory, and it may not be solved. The total debt is \$10, and the total cost of the 100 yards of ditch would be \$10, at the average cost of 10 cents a yard, and the average of 8 cents and 12 cents is 10 cents. But, in order to make this average, there must be the same number of yards at 8 cents as at 12 cents, and this is out of the question, since the man who digs for 8 cents per yard must dig more yards than he who digs for 12 cents a yard.

Disposition of Trash.

What shall I do with the ashes and trash in my yard when all the receptacles are full?

NEW RESIDENT.

State the facts to the Street Cleaning Department, phone Madison 1622, and the matter will be promptly and politely attended to.

Some Addresses.

Please give the address of the Southern Churchman and the Diocesan Journal and the County Gentleman and a little form paper at about 25 cents a year. Also tell me who is the head of the Adams Express Company, to whom I wish to write about a parcel.

MRS. M. J.

Richmond, Va., is address enough for the Southern Churchman, and that paper can give you the address of the Diocesan Journal. The County Gentleman's address is Albany, N. Y., and that paper can inform you as to subscription rates of the cheaper agricultural periodicals. The person for you to interview as to the parcel is the local agent of the express company. He will advise you what steps to take in any matter touching the company.

The National State and City Bank

invites you to open an account either in its Savings Department . . . CAPITAL AND SURPLUS \$1,600,000.00

